

NEWS RELEASE

Pacific Northwest Region - Willamette NF

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Release Date: September 7, 2016

Entire Length of McKenzie River Trail Open including Blue Pool

The portions of the McKenzie River Trail that lead to Tamolitch Falls, commonly known as Blue Pool, will be open to the public on Thursday, September 8. However, due to continued fire-related safety concerns, portions east of Blue Pool and the fire area remains closed including Forest Service roads 740 and 743. Necessary road work was completed Sunday on Forest Service road 655 at the trailhead near Trail Bridge Campground and Carmen Reservoir. Parking is now only allowed on the right side of the Forest Service Road 655 before the trailhead.

“Now that the Blue Top Fire is safely contained away from the McKenzie River Trail, we have determined it is safe to re-open that section of trail,” said Terry Baker, McKenzie River District Ranger. “I really appreciate everyone’s patience during the closure.”

Areas that are now open include the six mile stretch of the McKenzie River Trail between the trailhead near Trail Bridge Campground and the trailhead at Carmen Reservoir. Forest Service Roads 735 and 738 have also been re-opened.

Areas that remain closed include all areas east of Blue Pool and the fire area as well as the following roads:

- Forest Service Road 740
- Forest Service Road 743

The Blue Top Fire continues to smolder and visitors to this section of trail should expect to see occasional smoke across the river until autumn rains extinguish the fire completely. Firefighters from the McKenzie River Ranger Station continue to monitor the fire and unless you see a new start outside the Blue Top Fire area; there is no need to report it.

To assist visitors in understanding the closure and to help ensure public safety, two Forest Service representatives will be stationed near the entrance to Forest Service road 740. Google Maps inaccurately directs visitors to Blue Pool using Forest Service road 740, however this route goes directly through areas burned by the Blue Top Fire and remains closed. We are currently working with Google to correct this inaccuracy. There are two ways to access the trail to Blue Pool; from the trailhead near Trail Bridge Campground and from the trailhead at Carmen Reservoir.

In addition, two Forest Service representatives will be stationed at Blue Pool to provide information about the closure, intercept visitors trying to enter the closed area and help ensure safety. We would like to remind visitors to Blue Pool that even though the water appears to be inviting, it is a chilly 37 degrees Fahrenheit. Visitors to Blue Pool are encouraged to practice all Leave No Trace principles when they recreate on the McKenzie River Trail, but especially to properly dispose of waste. For more information about Leave No Trace, please visit <https://lnt.org/>.



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If you have any questions about the closure, contact the McKenzie River Ranger Station Monday-Friday 8:00 am to 4:30 pm at 541.822.3381. Visit our website www.fs.usda.gov/willamette/ and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) @willamettenf.

Map of the area closure attached.

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